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Reds deny Agca aid charges

Moscow (Combined Dispatches)—The Soviet Union yesterday dismissed as "absurd insinuations" the first public charges by Turkish terrorist Mehmet Ali Agca that the Soviet KGB and Communist Bulgarian agents helped him in his assassination attempt against Pope John Paul.

The new charges are intended to divert attention from "the true organizers and inspirers of acts of terrorism, who are closely linked with neo-fascist circles and the American CIA," the official Tass news agency said.

Agca, in a surprise encounter with reporters outside Rome police headquarters Friday night, charged publicly for the first time that the KGB and its ally, the Bulgarian secret service, were behind his May 13, 1981 shooting of the Pope.

Agca, 24, also linked three Bulgarian suspects to the plot and said he has proof of every action. He talked as guards led him to a police van.

Apparently based on Agca's testi-

mony, Italian officials last November arrested Sergei Ivanov Antonov, Rome station chief of the Bulgarian state airline. Two other Bulgarians and four Turks also have been implicated in the attack.

"I knew Sergei (Antonov), he was my accomplice," Agca was quoted as saying by the Italian AGI news agency.

Antonov has denied any involvement in the attack, but investigators have said they still believe he played an active role and refuse to release him despite diplomatic pressure from the Bulgarian government.

Agca also named two other Bulgarians—Teodor Ayvazov and Vassiliev Kolev—as accomplices. Both are former employes of the Bulgarian Embassy in Rome who now live in Bulgaria.

Agca's charges followed widespread speculation in the Western press that the Soviet Union wanted to eliminate the Polish-born pontiff because of his strong support for Poland's now-banned Solidarity trade union.